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CANADA CELEBRATES HISTORIC TLE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH STURGEON LAKE FIRST NATION AND PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

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Sturgeon Lake First Nation, SK (June 19, 2007) - At a ceremony today, the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Chief Wesley Daniels of the Sturgeon Lake First Nation and the Honourable Lon Borgerson, Saskatchewan Minister of Regional Economic and Co-operative Development on behalf of the Honourable Maynard Sonntag, Saskatchewan Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, signed a ceremonial document acknowledging a Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) Settlement Agreement.

After three years of tripartite negotiations and a successful First Nation ratification vote, this agreement provides the First Nation with a settlement amount of approximately $10.4 million for an outstanding TLE shortfall as well as the entitlement to purchase land. In addition, Canada will provide $620,501 for negotiation, ratification and acquisition costs.

"This settlement shows that when all the parties – Canada, the First Nation and the Province – are committed, decisive success at the negotiation table is possible," said Minister Prentice. "This settlement will bring economic benefits to the Sturgeon Lake First Nation and local communities as well as providing certainty for government, industry and non-Aboriginal Canadians."

Settling this claim enables the First Nation to invest directly in the province's economy through the purchase of land and through future economic development opportunities. Under the Agreement, Sturgeon Lake First Nation is entitled to purchase up to 38,971 acres (15,588 hectares) of land, on a willing-seller/willing-buyer basis, to convert to reserve status.

Chief Wesley Daniels stated that: "This is indeed a historic occasion for our people of the Sturgeon Lake First Nation. The settling of this Treaty Land Entitlement provides hope to our people that there is a spirit of continuity — the continuity of a people from the first Chief and leadership that signed the Treaty, to our ancestors and Elders who got us here, and forward to our children and grandchildren as well as to future generations who have the most to benefit from this agreement. We acknowledge the efforts of the negotiators, the Federal Minister of Indian Affairs Jim Prentice, the Provincial Minister Maynard Sonntag, and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Lawrence Joseph on this special day."

"The successful negotiation of this agreement is a significant achievement for Sturgeon Lake First Nation, Saskatchewan and Canada," Minister Lon Borgerson said. "In addition to satisfying the Province's obligation to help Canada fulfill outstanding TLEs, this settlement charts a path to greater economic and social development opportunities for the First Nation and its members and contributes to Saskatchewan's goal of building brighter futures for individuals, families and communities."

Negotiations between Canada, Saskatchewan and the First Nation began in June 2004, and a final agreement has now been achieved. The membership of the Sturgeon Lake First Nation ratified the agreement on January 25, 2007. 92% of those members who voted, voted to accept the settlement.

The Sturgeon Lake First Nation is located approximately 50 kilometres northwest of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. In 1876, Canada and several First Nations in Saskatchewan and Alberta, including Sturgeon Lake First Nation, entered into Treaty 6, which formed the basis for this claim. There are about 2,300 registered members of the Sturgeon Lake First Nation.

Fact Sheet - Sturgeon Lake Treaty Land Entitlement Settlement

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FACT SHEET - STURGEON LAKE TREATY LAND ENTITLEMENT SETTLEMENT

Background

The Sturgeon Lake First Nation is located approximately 50 kilometres northwest of Prince Albert. In 1876, Canada and several First Nations in Saskatchewan and Alberta — including the Sturgeon Lake First Nation — entered into Treaty Six. The Treaty stated that the Crown would set aside reserves, the size of which was not to exceed one square mile (2.59 square kilometres) per family of five (128 acres [51.2 hectares] per person).

History of the Claim

In 1996, the Sturgeon Lake First Nation submitted a Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) claim alleging that the First Nation did not receive the amount of reserve land to which it was entitled according to Treaty Six.

In March 2004 the Government of Canada accepted, for the purpose of negotiation, and on a without prejudice basis, that Sturgeon Lake First Nation had sufficiently established that Canada breached a lawful obligation to the Sturgeon Lake First Nation in that there is an outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) shortfall.

TLE claims are intended to settle the land debt owed to those First Nations that did not receive all the land to which they were entitled under historical treaties.

Tripartite negotiations among Canada, Saskatchewan and the Sturgeon Lake First Nation commenced in June 2004 and were facilitated by the Indian Specific Claims Commission. It was agreed by all parties that the terms of the 1992 Saskatchewan TLE Framework Agreement would form the basis for the settlement agreement.

The TLE Framework Agreement, dated September 22, 1992, provided 25 Saskatchewan First Nations with $440 million over 12 years to purchase land, mineral rights and improvements, including buildings and structures affixed to the lands. Four other Saskatchewan First Nations have signed TLE Agreements since 1992 and received just over $99 million in compensation.

Overview of the Settlement

Sturgeon Lake First Nation held a ratification vote on January 25, 2007— 55% of the eligible voters participated in the vote, and of those, 92% voted to accept the settlement.

Under the settlement, Sturgeon Lake First Nation is entitled to purchase up to 38,971 acres (15,588 hectares) of land on a willing seller/willing buyer basis to be set apart as a reserve. The

First Nation will receive a total of approximately $11 million for an equity payment, a mineral payment; and negotiation, ratification and acquisition costs.

Canada and Saskatchewan will also provide tax loss compensation to rural municipalities and school divisions in such rural municipalities where taxable land is set apart as reserve under the settlement.

Settlement of this claim will enable the Sturgeon Lake First Nation to invest directly in Saskatchewan's economy through the purchase of land and pursuit of economic development opportunities. It will also help clarify land and resource ownership, and create a positive and stable investment climate for the First Nation and surrounding communities.

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